

TRANSFER MODULE GUIDELINES

The intent of the Transfer Module is to help students acquire foundational learning experiences that will assure their ability to achieve success in upper-division course work. The Transfer Module may be a subset or the complete set of a college's or university's general education requirements. It contains 54-60 quarter hours or 36-40 semester hours of course credit in English composition (minimum of 5-6 quarter hours or 3 semester hours); mathematics, statistics, and formal/symbolic logic (minimum of 3 quarter hours or 3 semester hours); arts/humanities (minimum of 9 quarter hours or 6 semester hours); social and behavioral sciences (minimum of 9 quarter hours or 6 semester hours); and natural sciences (minimum of 9 quarter hours or 6 semester hours). Oral communication and interdisciplinary areas may be included as additional options. Additional elective hours from among these areas make up the total hours for a completed Transfer Module. Courses for the Transfer Module should be 100- and 200-level general education courses, and should provide a basic understanding of the modes of inquiry common to the disciplines within each area.

Transfer Module elective courses serve as “pathway” courses directly connected to advanced study in a major. Combined, the required Transfer Module courses, the elective major pathway courses, and additional recommended courses constitute the Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG) for an academic major. A TAG serves as a major advising tool to assist Ohio college and university students to make course selections that will ensure comparable, compatible, and equivalent general education learning experiences across the state’s higher-education system.

COMMON GUIDELINES FOR ALL COURSES

The fundamental criterion for considering a course for inclusion in the Transfer Module is that the course directly emphasize at least one of the learning outcomes for the Transfer Module, as described below. Each state institution should keep a file of courses in its Transfer Module; this file should include a rich course description that includes course learning outcomes and assessment methods linked to each learning outcome. Individual course syllabi should communicate these same learning outcomes and assessments to students.

A second general criterion is that all Transfer Module courses (or course sequences) require entry level college proficiencies appropriate to that course. Introductory survey courses are only one kind of course that satisfy this criterion. There are other approaches to the learning outcomes and the content areas that are within the spirit of general education, the Transfer Module, and its attendant TAGs.

Variable topics courses are not acceptable in any category of the Transfer Module.

Learning Outcomes for the Transfer Module

The Transfer Module and TAGs are closely aligned with general education programs at the state’s universities and colleges. The Transfer Module supports the concept of respect for unique visions for General Education within and among the family of Ohio public institutions. Although the specific character of each institution’s general education program carries with it something distinctive, all of the programs share some general principles in common: they are all designed to provide students with a **breadth of knowledge**; and they all are designed to develop **foundational**

skills and abilities.

These general learning goals are directly connected to advanced study in a major. No field of study exists in isolation. The breadth of knowledge provided in general education curricula provides necessary context and support for advanced study in a major. Similarly, the skills and abilities are directly used in all majors. For example, the conventions that define proficient writing in an education major and a biology major differ; however the foundational writing skills developed in general education are fundamental to the many different genres of writing found in particular majors.

The courses in the Transfer Module, in aggregate, emphasize breadth of knowledge in 100-200 level coursework that serves as an academic foundation for a liberal education; the learning outcomes for individual courses emphasize foundational skills and abilities (the following five bullets). The idea of “skills and abilities” is to be broadly construed—this is not an exhaustive list. For instance, “creativity” is undoubtedly a valued outcome related to communication, reasoning, inquiry, and so on, but “creativity” is not singled out as a separate outcome. So too, courses in the Transfer Module will all help develop students’ ability to find and evaluate information, a skill of particular importance in light of technology-based data resources and communication. Neither are the skills and abilities named here intended to focus exclusively on “academic” outcomes; some, like understanding cultural diversity and engaging in a democratic society, are intended to develop particular attitudes, beliefs, motivation, and behavior. Upon completion of the transfer module, students will be able to

- communicate effectively—all general education programs include a component for writing; many also include a component for oral communication or presentation.
- evaluate arguments in a logical fashion—competence in analysis and logical argument are explicit learning goals for most general education programs, although these skills go by a variety of names (e.g., critical thinking, analysis, logical thinking, etc.).
- employ the methods of inquiry characteristic of natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities—the tools for solving problems vary across disciplines; general education introduces students to methods of inquiry in several fields of study and thereby prepares students to integrate information from different disciplines.
- acquire an understanding of our global and diverse culture and society—many general education programs include a component that introduces students to traditions different than their own, and gives them opportunities to work productively with diverse peoples, cultures, and histories.
- engage in our democratic society—one of the overarching goals of general education is to prepare students to be active and informed citizens; the development of a disposition to participate in and contribute to our democracy is of equal importance to the goal of having the skills to do so intelligently.

By fall 2008, each course in the Transfer Module will explicitly connect statements of learning outcomes to assessments of student learning. The assessment of competency in the various learning outcomes will not only provide a bridge between general education and the majors, it will also provide the foundation for competency-based transfer among state institutions of higher education. One common approach to competency-based transfer is through the development of rubrics.

Taken together, the breadth of knowledge and the learning outcomes listed above prepare students

for advanced study in a major or specialized field; they also equip students with the tools and habits for continued learning throughout life.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO EACH AREA

English Composition

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the English Composition category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

The major learning emphasis shall include the teaching, practice, and evaluation of expository writing, although the course(s) may include other components. These writing activities must be reflected in statements of course learning outcomes and evaluation. Transfer students who have completed the Transfer Module will not be subjected to a diagnostic placement test at the receiving institution (unless required of native students who have completed comparable course work).

1. One college-level writing course adapted for students whose first language is not English may be included in the Transfer Module if this course is equivalent to the approved college composition course at the institution. Courses in which the main focus is understanding the English language (ESL course), basic grammar, and paragraph writing are not acceptable.
2. A second-level disciplinary course in a program such as Writing Across the Curriculum or Writing in the Disciplines is acceptable only when preceded by a required college-level writing course and if the course and syllabus description emphasizes writing instruction and evaluation.

Excluded: Remedial or developmental courses, special topics courses, upper division courses, and narrowly focused technical or pre-technical courses. Also excluded are courses that are pre-college courses, English as a Second Language (ESL), and creative writing.

Mathematics, Statistics and Formal/Symbolic Logic

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Mathematics, Statistics and Formal/Symbolic Logic category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

All students admitted to an institution of higher education are expected to meet criteria for mathematics proficiency. If students do not demonstrate proficiency sufficient for placement into college algebra, they will be required to take developmental mathematics courses to achieve the necessary proficiency. Developmental mathematics courses are not part of a Transfer Module. Rather, Transfer Module courses in this category assume entry-level proficiency in mathematics¹.

¹ Algebra 1: basic algebra techniques: simplifying and evaluating algebraic expressions, factoring, an introduction to graphing, solutions to first degree equations, inequalities, together with the analysis and solution to word problems.

Plane Geometry: basic properties of geometric figures, applications of geometric formulas, right triangles, trigonometry, basic postulates of Euclidean geometry, and construction of proofs of

College-level courses in this area will develop the student's mathematical power and problem-solving ability beyond the 12th grade high school exit standards. Courses in this area may include formal/symbolic logic, college algebra, statistics, mathematics in everyday life, pre-calculus, and calculus.

Excluded: Pre-college courses and developmental mathematics such as college arithmetic, plane geometry, beginning and intermediate algebra.

Arts/Humanities

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Arts/Humanities category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

Courses must be introductory-level courses that focus on the study of human endeavors spanning historical periods, regions, and cultures. Courses may be selected from the following areas: art, music, theatre, film, literature, religion, philosophy, ethics, and history. Students must select courses from at least two of the areas listed above.

1. Skills-based activities, whether graded or not, may be a part of courses in the Transfer Module provided that the courses meet the fundamental criteria (that they emphasize at least one of the learning outcomes for the Transfer Module, and that they assume entry level college proficiencies).
2. To be acceptable, foreign language courses must devote a majority of the course content to literature and not be grammar and/or skills based.

Excluded: Remedial or developmental courses, special topics courses, upper division courses, and narrowly focused technical or pre-technical courses. Also excluded are courses that are primarily designed for skill development or as preparation for advanced study in a major (e.g., applied music lessons, studio art, symbolic logic, theatre skills, and creative writing).

Social and Behavioral Sciences

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Social and Behavioral Sciences category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

Courses must be introductory-level courses that explain through empirical investigation and theoretical interpretation the behavior of individuals and/or various groups in societies, economies, governments, and subcultures. Courses may be selected from the social and behavioral science disciplines, including anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. Students must select courses from at least two of the areas

geometric theorems.

Algebra 2: intermediate algebra techniques: extension of basic algebra techniques, roots, radicals, rational exponents, quadratic equations; solution of second degree equations and applications, more linear inequalities, absolute value equations and inequalities; an introduction to functions, together with the analysis and solution of word problems.

listed above.

Excluded: Remedial or developmental courses, special topics courses, upper division courses, and narrowly focused technical or pre-technical skill-based courses. Also excluded are courses that are career preparation courses, non-credit continuing education courses, and life experience courses.

Natural Sciences

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Natural Sciences category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

Courses of an introductory nature must make clear the importance of experimental inquiry in the sciences and the way in which such inquiry into the natural world leads scientists to formulate principles that provide universal explanations of diverse phenomena. These courses should have as a goal the development of an understanding of how scientific principles are built and used in the modern world and of the impact of science on society. Through these courses, students should develop an understanding of structured thinking involving induction and deduction. Courses may be selected from natural science disciplines such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, environmental science, geology, physical geography, and physics. At least one of the courses must have a laboratory component as follows:

1. The laboratory component of courses must carry at least one credit hour and must meet an average of no less than two hours per week.
2. All course descriptions must include a breakdown of lecture and laboratory hours per course.

Excluded: Remedial or developmental courses, special topics courses, upper division courses, and narrowly focused technical or pre-technical courses. Also excluded are courses that focus exclusively on content coverage, without addressing the learning outcomes for the Transfer Module.

Oral Communication

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Oral Communication category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

Courses in oral communication are an option for *elective* courses within the Transfer Module. If a student completes a course in oral communication but does not complete a Transfer Module, the course may only apply as an elective upon transfer, because not all institutions have this requirement.

The major emphasis of the course must be extemporaneous public speaking (individual/group work) as reflected in statements of course learning outcomes and evaluation. The course(s) may include group presentations and argumentation. Typically, hybrid courses in oral communication include examination of communication theory, but should concentrate on evaluated oral presentations as the primary focus of the course.

Approved - December 8, 2005
Effective Fall of 2006

1. Courses that include communication principles leading up to the study or understanding of the oral communication process in other forms (e.g., interviewing, interpersonal, dyads, listening) are not precluded if they meet the criterion for emphasis on extemporaneous public speaking.
2. Courses in oral communication are in addition to English composition and may not replace or substitute for composition courses.

Excluded: Remedial or developmental courses, special topics courses, upper division courses, and narrowly focused technical or pre-technical courses. Also excluded are courses that are courses in which the main focus is theory, the study of communication styles, or oral interpretation and performance. (Students should research and prepare their own oral presentations, not give a recitation of existing work.)

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

In addition to the Common Guidelines described above, the courses in the Interdisciplinary Studies category are subject to the following guidelines and restrictions.

Courses with content or methodology drawn explicitly from more than one of Natural Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts/Humanities; English Composition; Oral Communication; and Mathematics, Statistics and Formal/Symbolic Logic are defined as “Interdisciplinary.”

1. The fundamental criteria for inclusion of Interdisciplinary courses in a Transfer Module are the general ones that apply to all courses, specifically: A) that they emphasize at least one of the learning outcomes of the Transfer Module, and B) that they assume entry-level college proficiencies.
2. Inasmuch as one of the purposes of general education is to provide a “breadth of knowledge,” Interdisciplinary courses directly serve one of the purposes of general education and the Transfer Module. It is possible that an entire Transfer Module could be constructed from Interdisciplinary courses, provided the courses *in aggregate* did not neglect any one of Natural Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts/Humanities; English Composition; or Mathematics, Statistics and Formal/Symbolic Logic.

In terms of providing breadth of knowledge, two courses that each span (for instance) the Natural Sciences and the Social Sciences should be considered equivalent to the combination of one Natural Science and one Social Science course. Consequently, each Interdisciplinary course should specify which areas of knowledge it draws on.

3. Interdisciplinary courses must be approved by a panel comprising faculty who teach interdisciplinary courses.

When a course is submitted for approval as an Interdisciplinary course, the proposal must specify which areas (viz., Natural Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts/Humanities; English Composition; or Mathematics, Statistics and Formal/Symbolic Logic) the course includes. Furthermore, the proposal must apportion the credit hours of the course to each of the areas. Such

Approved - December 8, 2005
Effective Fall of 2006

apportionment could involve divisions as small as half-credit hours. For instance, if a 3-hour course in environmental studies is roughly half natural science and half social science, then 1.5 hours of the course will be attributed to natural science and 1.5 hours to social science. A detailed example is provided.